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JUNE WEATHER AND CROPS:

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Weather Bureau, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, July 5, 1938, and broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations.

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The weather during the month of June was decidedly abnormal over large areas of the country as regards both temperature and precipitation. The outstanding feature was the extreme and persistently high temperatures, establishing new June records for extreme heat and duration of abnormal warmth, throughout the Central and Northern States. It was the warmest June ever known rather generally in a large area of the north-central portion of the country, extending from the southwestern Lake region, the western Ohio Valley, Missouri and Kansas northward. In many places of this section it was not only the warmest June of record, but the monthly averages of temperature were considerably higher than heretofore experienced during the past 50 years or more. For example, Valentine, Nebr., Sioux City, Ia., Huron, S. Dak., and St. Paul, Minn., had mean temperatures 4° higher than the previous high record for the month. Many places in the Lake region and some points to the westward had the highest maximum temperatures of record for June, and a few points reported the highest known for any month. During the latter part of the period the heat wave centered in the Great Plains and Southwestern States where a number of succeeding days had maxima ranging from 100° to well above that mark.

The month, as a whole, had more than normal warmth in nearly all sections of the country. The monthly mean at a few isolated stations along the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts were slightly below normal, but elsewhere they were from normal to decidedly above. The relatively warmest area includes the States from the Ohio and extreme lower Missouri Valleys, and southern Great Plains northward and north-westward. Considerable sections of this area had monthly mean temperatures from 8° to 12° above normal.

Precipitation during June was nearly as abnormal as the temperature, with all, except limited and widely scattered areas, having deficient moisture. The droughty conditions centered in the western Ohio and central Mississippi Valleys and the Southwest. Preliminary reports from a large number of stations, grouped by States, show that Oklahoma, with scarcely 10 percent of its normal rainfall, was the driest; Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, and Indiana had only about one-fourth of normal, while Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, and Illinois had considerably less than half the usual amount for the month. In fact, only a few States east of the Rocky Mountains had more than half the normal, with only a few isolated stations showing as much as the usual for June. Many places had the least rainfall of record for the month; for example, New Orleans had less rain than heretofore recorded for any June in the past 97 years, while St. Louis, Mo., had the second driest in almost a century.

The rains were very irregularly distributed. New Orleans had scarcely more than 10 percent of normal, while Mobile, Ala., a short distance eastward, had more than normal. Kansas City, Mo., had about a third of normal, while St. Joseph,

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near by, had more than the normal amount. A limited area of the Southwest had unusually abundant rains for the season, while much of the Great Basin, adjoining, had no rain at all during the entire month.

Showers the latter part of the month relieved conditions materially in the Lake region and some adjoining sections, while the middle Atlantic area had more favorable conditions as to moisture.

As affecting growing crops the weather of June was decidedly unfavorable over large areas. In many localities where showers occurred near the close of the month, especially in the more eastern States, vegetation responded rapidly to the improved moisture conditions and rains have been very helpful over larger areas since the first of July. In addition to the Eastern States, the most important areas receiving substantial and beneficial relief recently include the Pacific Northwest, the southern Rocky Mountain districts, some central Gulf sections, the Lake region, and upper Mississippi Valley.

Truck gardens, pastures, and small grains, especially oats and spring wheat, were the crops most adversely affected by June weather and in these the greatest deterioration occurred. There was no widespread, permanent harm to corn and cotton, though the need of a good rain had become increasingly evident by the close of the month over most important producing sections.

Winter wheat suffered further harm, especially in the northwestern portion of the belt, but the greatest damage occurred to spring wheat and oats. In North Dakota wheat lost ground steadily and in South Dakota much grain was reported not worth harvesting, with some being cut for hay and some pastured in both States.

Oats have been seriously affected by the heat and drought. They were nearly all cut in the Southwest, while in the Ohio Valley deterioration was reported, with too rapid ripening. In Iowa upland oats were dying, with much heading too short to harvest with binders and some were being grazed. More recently this State has had some good rains, though it was the hottest and dryest June for the 60 years for which State records are available.